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EPIDEMIC INFLUENZA.

PREVALENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.

On page 2329 of this issue of the Public Health Reports, under the heading "Current State Summaries," are given telegraphic reports of the presence of communicable diseases in the States which have reported for the week ended December 21, 1918.

In most of the States the number of cases of influenza is less than was reported for the preceding week, but slight increases are noted in Michigan, New Jersey, Maine, and in parts of New York State.

The reports from the zones around military camps, which are given on page 2334, also show a reduction in the number of cases as compared with the preceding week, except in the zones around Camp Devens, Mass., Camp Dix, N. J., Camp Doniphan, Okla., Camp Humphries, Va., Camp Lewis, Wash., Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and in the civil sanitary districts near New London, Conn., Portsmouth, N. H., Kittery, Me., Newport News, Va., and Gulfport, Miss. In these zones slight increases in the number of cases reported are noted.

PRELIMINARY STATISTICS OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.¹

By EDGAR SYDENSTRICKER, Public Health Statistician, United States Public Health Service.

It must be obvious that it is too soon to attempt any satisfactory presentation of the statistics of the present influenza epidemic for the country as a whole. The epidemic and its immediate after effects are not yet ended. Sufficient opportunity has not been afforded for proper inquiry into the dates of its first manifestations in various localities. Its complete chronology, therefore, can not be recorded at this time. For the same reason statistics of its incidence and prevalence are not only incomplete, but the task of collecting such records as have been made is barely under way.

If time and labor were the only requisites for complete statistics of the epidemic, however, the outlook from the point of view of statistical analysis would be an encouraging one. So far as morbidity prevalence and incidence of the disease are concerned, the

¹ Read before the section on vital statistics of the American Public Health Association, Chicago, December 9, 1918.